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INFORMATION REPORT

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East Germany

SUBJECT

Public-Opinion Poll

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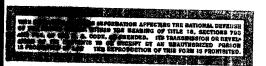
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SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

etitut fur 7 " chichte" [Institute for Contemporary History] their views on the following points:

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- What were the effects of the easing of interzonal traffic on the East German population?
- Is the rationing system at present in use in the GDR to be retained or atclished?
- 2. This polling took place in Leipzig and Kreis Aschersleben between 20 and 24 April 1954. It had the following result:

About 72 percent of all those contacted answered question No.1 in a positive way. These persons pointed out that the easing of interzonal traffic made possible the resumption of contects with family members and friends in West Germany. They also stated that a visit in West Germany showed that many conditions there left much to be desired. On the positive side of the ledger people referred to the greater amount of personal freedom, a higher standard of living, the payment of much higher pensions, and the freedom from continuous controls in West Germany. The weak points in the West German system noted by hest German visitors were: excessive luxury side by and with lew wages. the scarcity of housing facilities, the school system, and the absence of sufficient scholarships for students, lack of work, insufficient care for the wouth, and the absence of price ceilings. Eleven percent of those questioned enswered question No. 1 in the negative. They pointed out that East German wisitors in West Germany were liable to be recruited as West German agents and that these visitors were not in a position to form a critical judgment of the spurious fegade of prosperity built up by the West. The remainder of those rolled were undecided. Regarding question No. 2, 86 percent of those asked for their opinion were in favor of the existing rationing system, mostly because this system guaranteed low prices for essential commodities, such as meat, fat, suger, and coal. About & percent of those polled were against mattering, while the reresinder were indifferent. The public opinion poll clearly though that shout 70 persent of those questioned rejected the assuance of differentiated retion dards rewarding persons of vital importance to the regime with more food and retter clothing.

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